

Annual Report of Major Outputs and Outcomes
Fundamental State-based Occupational Safety & Health Surveillance Program
Georgia Department of Public Health
Project Period: July 1, 2012-June 30, 2013

Principal Investigator: Rana Bayakly (404) 657-2617, arbayakly@dhr.state.ga.us
Epidemiologist: Antionette Lavender (404) 657-1943, anlavender@dhr.state.ga.us

Major Outputs:

- Emergency Response Health Monitoring Surveillance

Ms Lavender, Ms. Bayakly, and other Georgia Department of Public Health (GA DPH) Epidemiology and Environmental Health staff met with staff from NIOSH Emergency Preparedness and Response Office to learn more about Emergency Response Health Monitoring Surveillance (ERHMS) and CDC's Public Health Preparedness Capability 14. Interest was expressed in conducting ERHMS in Georgia by occupational health surveillance, emergency response, and environmental health staff. *Intermediate Outcomes:* A pilot project is currently being planned in collaboration with occupational health surveillance, emergency response, and environmental health staff to conduct ERHMS with the GA DPH regional Environmental Health STRIKE Teams, which are deployed to respond to emergency incidents. This project will be used to assess the feasibility and potential impact of conducting EHRMS statewide. A Standard Operating Procedures Guidebook based on CDC's ERHMS Technical Assistance Document is currently being developed for the STRIKE Teams.

- BRFSS Industry and Occupation Workgroup

Ms. Lavender joined the NIOSH Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) Industry and Occupation Workgroup as a representative of the state of Georgia and as an expert on analysis of BRFSS data. She attended the in-person meeting held at NIOSH in Cincinnati, OH as well as monthly teleconference workgroup meetings for adding industry and occupation to the BRFSS. *Intermediate Outcomes:* Participation in the workgroup will facilitate effective use of industry and occupation data in BRSS to enhance state and federal occupational health surveillance and allow for multi-state collaboration on reports and/or publications.

- OSHA Blood Lead Referrals

In collaboration with the Georgia Adult Blood Level Epidemiology and Surveillance (ABLES) Program and Georgia Environmental Health Ms. Bayakly and Ms. Lavender met with a Region IV Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) representative to discuss more about the memorandum of understanding (MOU) process and the benefits and risks of Georgia referring elevated blood lead cases to OSHA. A Georgia MOU was drafted and was in the process of approval. However, this project has been halted due to the elimination of ABLES funding. *Potential Outcome:* Without ABLES funding we are not able to refer elevated blood level cases to OSHA and the potential to reduce work-related illnesses due to lead exposures and identify and regulate workplace sources of excessive lead exposure is thwarted.

- Rural Health Project

Ms. Bayakly, Ms. Lavender, and the state's emergency response coordinator met with the director of the Office of Rural Health to discuss collaboration on a rural health-related project. The director expressed interest in a project with migrant workers. *Potential Outcome:* Data are currently being reviewed for a potential project related to heat illness, pesticide poisoning, and/or contact dermatitis among migrant workers in Georgia's rural areas.

- Access to Georgia Poison Center Data

Ms. Lavender met with the Georgia Poison Center (GPC) to discuss data needs. She was granted real-time access to the Poison Center's database. This will allow for queries of information calls and exposure cases for special analyses and data requests, pending approval by GPC Internal Review Board when necessary. *Potential Outcome:* The GPC database and the *Pesticide-Related Injury and Surveillance How-to Guide for State-Based Programs* are currently being reviewed to assess the potential to participate in pesticide poisoning surveillance.

- Georgia Occupational Health Surveillance Webpage

A webpage was created for the Occupational Health Surveillance Program on the GA DPH website at <http://health.state.ga.us/epi/cdiee/occupationalhealth.asp>. *Potential Outcome:* This webpage will increase awareness of the surveillance program and occupational health indicators.

Publications and Presentations:

- APHA Presentation

Ms. Lavender conducted an oral presentation at the American Public Health Association (APHA) 140th Annual Meeting and Expo entitled “Impact of Perceived Racial Discrimination on Employee Health: Results from the Georgia Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 2010.” *Potential Outcome:* Results of this analysis have created opportunities for collaboration with the state’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and Worksite Wellness Program.

- GPHA and CSTE Presentations

Ms. Lavender, and Ms. Viani Ramirez-Irizzary (Georgia Violent Death Reporting System Epidemiologist) collaborated on re-coding the occupational text fields available in the Georgia Violent Death Reporting System (GVDRS) database according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ 2010 Standard Occupational Codes for all violent deaths (homicide, suicide, and legal interventions, unintentional firearm, undetermined) that occurred in Georgia during 2006-2009. Over 8,000 deaths were recoded. Using this data, Ms. Lavender and Ms. Ramirez conducted an oral presentation entitled “Exploring Violent Deaths among Georgia Workers, 2006-2009” at the 84th Annual Georgia Public Health Association (GPHA) Meeting. Also Ms. Lavender and Ms. Ramirez presented a poster entitled “Exploring Violent Deaths among Georgia Workers by Occupation, 2006-2009” at the 2013 Annual Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE) Conference. *Potential Outcome:* GVDRS case narratives are currently being reviewed to determine work-relatedness of the homicide and suicide cases. Potential opportunities for collaborations will be discussed with the state’s Worksite Wellness and Suicide Prevention Programs.

- Occupational Health Surveillance Report

A surveillance report entitled “Georgia Occupational Health Surveillance Report, 2006-2009 was approved for publication and is currently posted on the GA DPH website at http://health.state.ga.us/pdfs/epi/cdiee/GA%20Occupational%20Health%20Report%202006_2009web.pdf. The report covers all 20 Occupational Health Indicators and three additional state-specific indicators. *Potential Outcome:* An announcement of the report’s publication was submitted to be announced in the July issue of NIOSH eNews. The report will also be distributed to members of the occupational health Advisory Committee. This report dissemination will allow for increased program awareness and opportunities for collaboration.